/65 cont./

000 children (see pp. 64 ff.). A thin cord of cotton or plant fibers,
301 which is occasionally worn below the knees, is supposed to
856 strengthen the legs, and corresponding upper-arm cords, the muscles (in the case of boys) and the arms (in the case of girls). Moreover, small girls wear strings crossed over their chests so that they will have well-shaped breasts later on.

f) Childhood

593 Even in boyhood and girlhood the family bears the chief
859 responsibility for all educational measures. The boy, to be sure, is now drawn to the father somewhat more and gradually begins to free himself from his mother. With his bow, which his father has made for him, he daily practices shooting small birds, for it is believed that a boy who kills many birds will later become a good hunter. They are cleaned and prepared by the girls, however, and together the children then have a meal, to which the girls often contribute cooked bananas or manioc flat-cakes. In play the children are properly prepared for their future duties and responsibilities as adults. Thus, the girls occasionally also help their mothers and fetch their water or wood, or they assume the care of their younger siblings.

861 The modest, thoughtful nature of these Indian children
[157] should be emphasized. Yet they are never beaten and they never hear a harsh word either from their parents or from other adults. Gentle admonishment suffices to reprove a child if it is really
857 naughty on occasion. Even in their play, however, there are
● 152 seldom such quarrels as are so frequent among civilized children. It would be quite unthinkable, for example, for a Surára or Pakidái child to run to its mother in order to complain about a playmate.

524 Boys and girls grow up together quite naturally and without constraint, as is shown by the fact that group games are preferred to solitary games. A great favorite, among others, is a game of ball which they play with a monkey bladder. It is batted upward with the palm of the hand (see also p. 246). They also play a sort of tug-of-war with lianas (see p.244). Moreover, the boys
[868] often imitate the dances of the men, while the girls are very fond of string games. It is especially popular to play "mother and

Surára
Pakidái

/115 cont./

123 157 twilight of the forest, a packet of cigarettes fell out of my trousers pocket. Who can describe my astonishment when in the evening at a halting place an Indian brought back to me the packet with the contents intact. Naturally, I gave the honest finder the cigarettes and a knife in addition.

Similarly, during my months-long stay with the two tribes I always had all the trunks, boxes, and bags standing open, and yet nothing was ever stolen from me. Even the barter of ethnographic objects always took place, usually under the supervision of the chiefs, in perfect peace and tranquilly. When I presented knives, pots, glass beads, and other objects to men, women, or children, /116/ they always took them with impassive faces, [92] but without expressing gratitude. There is no word for "thanks" in their language, any more than there is in the other Indian languages. In their shining eyes, however, I could read that they were pleased.

● 152 157 Before the departure of a member of the family there are never any sentimental scenes between relatives, let alone endearments, and even at the return one can see aroused emotion only in the shining eyes.

123 In the presence of strangers, women and girls in particular are at first timid and grave, but when one has gained their confidence, they are gay and unrestrained. I very quickly gained the affection of the children and with it also that of their parents and the other adults. One's behavior, of course, plays an important part in relations with the Indians. If one approaches the Surára and Pakidái in a friendly and courteous manner, one can accomplish anything with them. On the other hand, if one expressed himself disapprovingly with regard to their customs and habits, scolded them, or beat a child, he would be inviting their antagonism. Thus, a visit to the malokas of these Indians is not to be recommended to nervous people, for one does not find any rest throughout the entire day, and it is often lacking at night as well. There were always men, women, and children standing or sitting around me. In the beginning, they tirelessly pronounced the words of their language for me, but they never laughed at me if I repeated them with the wrong accent. At first they even

/220 cont./

159 764 inside, it is tied with lianas. Then they take the corpse into the forest where it is deposited, at a distance of some kilometers, on the branches of a tree in order for the flesh to decompose there. Often the members of the family will not leave the corpse alone in the forest for fear that animals will come and [775] devour it. The dead are very much afraid of animals and shout when a jaguar approaches them.

[825] The feline respects only a dead sablí, because he will die [756] in turn if he approaches.

Our informant spent several nights next to his father's [784] corpse, always being very careful not to step on the damp ground beneath the dead man, because those who step there lose their feet.

● 152 764 The grief of the relatives is so intense that very often some of them can not endure the pain and go to the forest to die. Above all the women lament a great deal during the night and the men hold them back so that they will not run away to the forest. The informant remembered that the strongest man of his tribe behaved as though he were mad after the death of his father and wanted to kill everybody. The men did not allow him to go with them into the forest to gather up the bones of his father for fear that, given his behavior, he might commit some crime.

765 After one month, more or less, the men of the tribe go to the forest and gather up the bones of their companion; the flesh decomposes completely during this period. Some of the men let down the coffin and others wrap the remains of the deceased in some large leaves, making in this way a bundle of bones which they take back with them to the rancheria. There they place it in a hammock and leave it for about four days, while the relatives continue to weep in uninterrupted lamentation.

765 775 [756] Later the sablí carries the bones to a fire prepared in the plaza and places them on top of the pile of firewood. Our informant also said that as the sablí did this he pronounced a well-known formula which means: "you are getting along well," for, if he did not say this, the hĩkula would not be able to find its way. Afterwards he lights the fire, blows upon it at the same time as he raises his arms /221/ above his head, and in the smoke

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

to use our machetes to open up a fair-sized space so that we could drag the canoes up on to dry ground beyond the reach of possible floods. Behind the bamboos we could see traces in the undergrowth of an old track, which after crossing thirty-two hills and the length of the Aracosa river would lead us to a horde of howling ape-men, who cultivated cane for their arrows, and nothing else.

Uarema had a young dove which he had caught alive on the way along the Merevari, and was looking after it. He gave it the affectionate name of Pipa. Sempronio helped him by looking for little berries, which the pretty little bird took greedily. The others were meanwhile busy putting up a shelter for the night and clearing a little more space around it, while Hashimo and Solituan went off to make a brief reconnaissance of the all but vanished track. Uarema paid no attention to anything but his Pipa, calling its name softly and fondling it like a child.

A love for animals always seems strange among these Indians, and when it exists it is subject to the wildest caprice. For instance, a monkey, after being brought up among them with every sign of affection, will suddenly become a comic target for their blunt arrows and die a slow death from its wounds.

For the moment Uarema was lavishing all his affection on Pipa, and when I accidentally trod on the bird, squashing it flat as a pancake, he turned on me instinctively, as if he was going to throw himself on me: the Guayca Indian in him had suddenly come out, roused by this offence against his love for the poor little dove crushed under the foreigner's foot. But suddenly his mood changed and without a word he picked up the squashed bird, under whose wings there was still a flutter of life, and threw it far off, with an air of disgust.

Sempronio watched the incident, laughing very quietly as he always did and looking up at me: he seemed to regard me as some sort of personal protector of his own. Then he went off in search of Pipa. Rolled up in a few leaves, the bird was put aside for his private cuisine.

Sempronio came from Auai stock. He was a mere boy, not fully developed, and he had joined us in this Samatari venture simply because I had told him to come. 'He doesn't want to come, but you want him to, so he comes'—these were the exact words into which Uarema had translated Sempronio's brief remarks. And he came everywhere with us, even to the Samatari, who were considered by his own people—a good, *smiling* people, whose only remaining primitive trait lay in their inordinate passion for theft—to be monsters ready at

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema

A vast and multiform horde it is that besieges the trees; a people millions strong, each one of whom wages its own small war and combines with the rest in the greater struggle.

IV

In the three brothers, all that was best in this wild region could truly be said to have found some form of expression. Their reactions were at times incomprehensible—sudden reflexes resulting from a life utterly different in every way from our own and in some degree akin to the animals'. They were always together, not mixing with the other Shirians and building their own little separate shelter. Every night, when work was finished, they came to us, rubbing themselves against us and indicating by gestures what goods they would like for their pay.

They had certain phobias, the most interesting being a fear of nails. Carmine always had a long nail handy, and each evening he would hammer it into one of the hut-poles to hang up his gun and cartridge-case. This produced a terrible effect on one of the brothers. He would stand and watch as it paralysed, for all the world as though the nail was being driven into his own forehead. If Carmine showed him the nail, holding it out to him, he would cry '*Ma, ma*' and run off to hide in his little hut. Generally, however, he was most friendly, even affectionate, towards us. Carmine had once rashly promised to cut his hair for him, and since a haircut for one meant a haircut for everybody and the expedition's only pair of scissors was precious, we lost a whole day while my companion gained some experience of the barber's trade. The Indians spent their time looking at themselves in the glass and examining each other's coiffure for defects which they wanted attended to at once.

In imitation of the tales the Shirians told, Carmine had invented a terrifying personage called Barabàn, a kinsman of his, who lived somewhere over the mountains. Barabàn made such an impression on everyone that the myth became a real moral weapon and came in very useful when the Indians needed a little prodding. When Carmine told his tale, in a mixture of Shirian, Makiritari, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian, they would listen with eyes like saucers, in curiosity and fear: 'Barabàn and a hundred robbers and a hundred fierce dogs—they live in the trees like monkeys—eat women and children, cooked—

9:Grelier K-5 (1951) 1957 SQ18 Yanoama SQ 18
Guaharibo

123 From the second day onwards their audacity began to become a nuisance. Pots, pans, empty boxes, string, knives and, of course, machetes, constantly excited their greed and began to disappear, to be concealed among the rocks at the foot of the hills. From then on we had to keep our stores, bags and dixies under lock and key. During the daytime they roamed about the camp, driven by curiosity to see so much that was new, but with the night they would again herd together round their [152] fires at the water's edge. They were very jealous of their women-folk and paid them the most touching attention. One [758] of the women was frequently shaken by violent fits of coughing and each time her mate would bring her a gourd of water he had drawn from the river and support her while she drank. When the coughing started again, the poor man's face would take on an expression of powerless solicitude.

595 As far as I could discover the Guaharibos are monogamous
162 and their women are definitely in the minority—as evidenced by the present group of nine men and two women. When, by
578 means of signs and gestures, we asked the unattached males
684 whether they had no wives, the answer was in each case in the negative. Cardona told us that the most common cause of
838 quarrels among them is raping of the women. We thought that homosexuality was also probably common practice. We
201 had no actual proof of this, but saw many instances of ges-
123 tures—usually among themselves, but occasionally directed at us—which were, to say the least, equivocal. To the Guaharibos such gestures were obviously natural and proper behaviour.

123 In order to watch their reactions we fired a few rounds of
411 ammunition. Accustomed to the silence of the forest and trained to hear the least rustle of sound, they betrayed instant terror. Clapping their hands over their ears, they fled. We invited them to demonstrate their own weapons. They handled their powerful bows with astonishing ease and accuracy and could send their light arrows, five to six feet long and made of straight reed stems, nearly a hundred yards. With a termite hill some eighteen inches high and twelve inches across as target, they hit it consistently from fifty yards. Shooting

Yanoama 5818

Bari 5513

/25 cont./

know of several cases. Neither do we deny proven and concrete cases of attacks by the Indians on Creoles; we have certain proof of several. But, does not this same thing also occur among us in every city, town, or village?

53. In particular there is talk of the untamable wildness of the Sirianá of the Paragua River and of the Motilón of the Zulia. As for the former, there is no doubt whatsoever that such butchers do not exist, as we were able to prove in the expedition made in the year 1940 and we reported this in an article published in the Boletín de la Sociedad Venezolana de Ciencias Naturales, Volume VIII, No. 53, to which we refer now.

As for the latter, what is certain is that they have trade relations with the Indians of the Tukuku River, with which statement at least half of the legend is destroyed, that part which says that the Motilón did not permit even dealing with or the approach of other tribes. And regarding their hate of Creoles and their aggressiveness, I refer to the judgment of Mr. Gsell, quoted by A. Jahn in his book, Los Aborígines del Occidente de Venezuela /The Aborigines of Western Venezuela/, page 99, where he says: "As for the temperament of the Motilón, Gsell's opinion is that he does not consider them dangerous whilst they have not been molested by the Creoles; so that their hostility towards the whites is always motivated by a spirit of revenge."

He himself says: "Creole peons are too cowardly and imprudent to be able to enter into dealings with the Motilón and when they have had the fortune to run across a plantation of yucca and plantain trees, made by the Indians, they pull up the tubers and cut the ripe fruit, in this way provoking their ire." While holding the same ideas as Mr. Gsell, we can add that, as we well know from the not short time spent living among the Indians and the not narrow circle of our observations, the abuses he denounces are the least; other much more important ones, which it is not necessary to name, have caused and do cause reprisal; and what is remarkable is

121 reasoning, as most of the Yąnomamö villages are presently
583 uncontacted, and those that are in contact with foreigners
582 have only recently (since 1951) entered into these contacts.
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583 Yąnomamö marriages, even the preferred form, are
582 influenced by the milieu of inter-village hostility within
*628 which they are contracted. Marriages in this milieu have as
613 their major function the promotion of social ties between the descent groups represented in the exchange and are best understood as the deployment of women between groups with the purpose of promoting political and military alliances. The groups in question may be of two kinds: the local patrilineages comprising a particular village, or the members of different villages as such. As the only corporate group among the Yąnomamö is the local lineage, marriages within and between villages are to be understood as alliances between different corporate groups.[1]

583 The variables affecting marriage practice--weakness
582 of descent as a solidarity-promoting medium, village size
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*621 and instability, the chronic nature of warfare, the shortage
921 of women, attitudes about aggressiveness and demonstration
• 152 of ferocity by individuals, and economic practices--are such that some deviation from the normative marriage rules is necessary to insure maximum survival chances for the resi-
583 dents of the various autonomous villages. Because marriage
582
*621 exchanges in general have political and military implications,

*[621]

[1]Yąnomamö villages are not corporate groups.

*621 White's generalization that

> every society tends to behave in such a way as to achieve that balance between size and solidarity that will give it the maximum effectiveness in carrying on its life-sustaining activities. (1959:104)

*621 Belligerent ideology and aggressive behavior
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Village size plays an important role in the nature of the political relationships between groups that are not linked by kinship ties. As mentioned above, larger villages tend to use their strength and dominance to upset the exchange balance of women. But the degree to which a powerful group is able to force a dependent ally to cede women is limited by the ability of the smaller group to raid the
*621 larger village successfully. In ideological terms the
*628 Yanomamö express this capacity to wage war by placing
721 emphasis on and valuing aggressive behavior. It is consid-
• 152 ered both proper and desirable to act ferociously, as this
181 informs neighbors of the group's capacity to wage war and warns them that the group is willing to resort to war in political dealings.

*621 Members of small villages are consequently constrained
*628 to behave militantly toward larger neighbors to limit the
526 coercion that the larger group may be tempted to try. Their
574 fierce behavior takes the form of threat, bluff, chicanery
152 in trading and, most important, challenges to duels. Frequently, when villagers are invited to feast with an allied group, the invitation includes a challenge to a chest-pounding

duel. Such a duel functions to remind the allies that the host is strong and willing to display his strength to protect his sovereignty.

The practical effect of this kind of behavior is that the solidarity of political alliances is constantly threatened. Allies are always suspicious of each other's intentions, and political ties between them are tenuous.

Although the giving of women in marriage between allies serves to promote solidarity, the capacity for marriage to achieve this end in itself is limited by the constant displays of hostility and aggressiveness by both groups.

The display of ferocity is manifest at the local, village level also. No insult is too slight to go unnoticed and unchallenged. Indeed, most individuals seize upon these opportunities to display strength. Thus, a legitimate way for men to display aggressiveness is for them to beat their errant wives, to burn them with fire brands, to cut their arms and legs with machetes or to shoot them in a non-vital part of the body with a barbed arrow. Men constantly intimidate their wives and respond cruelly to the slightest provocations, such as the wife's failure to act quickly on a husband's demand for food. Men who are brutal to their wives are feared and respected by other men, for the implication of this behavior is that the man will behave equally fiercely if insulted by another man.

Men often prefer to have a wife from another village, upon whom it is easier--and safer--to vent ferocity and

cruel actions; that is, the extent to which husbands are brutal to their wives is largely a function of the number of kinsmen the women have within the village, particularly brothers. Some men have even killed their wives in fits of rage, but in all the cases for which I have complete data, the women came from other villages and had no kinsmen in their husband's village to protect them. Conversely, when women have brothers within the village, their husbands exercise restraint in their treatment of them, knowing that the brothers of the women will use force to defend them. It is not unusual for a man to take his sister away from a cruel husband and to give her to someone else; this inevitably leads to club-fighting and frequently causes the village to split.

Ideological considerations, therefore, promote friction and fighting within villages and lead to village splits; and, the newly formed factions are obliged to seek marriage alliances with other groups.

Economic practices

Local groups abandon residential and horticultural sites only when forced to do so by the raiding pattern of their enemies. For the most part, the Yanomamö are able to predict the hostilities that will force them to abandon their gardens, and they plan accordingly. The first act of a war is frequently the clearing of a new garden at some distance from the presently occupied site. If hostilities develop within the village and it is expected that these will

illustrate how village shifts are related to warfare, and how foresight in establishing new gardens serves to facilitate village movement in anticipation of wars. The Monou-tedi planned to raid the PatanowÃ-tedi after the latter had recovered five of the seven women abducted by the Monou-tedi in November 1964. The Monou-tedi, of course, expected to be raided in turn by the PatanowÃ-tedi, so they began making a new garden in a direction away from their enemies, anticipating the revenge raids they knew would follow. In short, the Monou-tedi prepared for the war by initiating work on a new garden in a more defensible area--closer to their allies and across a large river--an action they hoped would permit them to remain completely independent of the largesse of their allies.

The graded violence pattern[1] of the YąnomamÖ may be viewed from the standpoint that such a pattern facilitates the establishment of new gardens while villages split. Thus, grievances may be temporarily settled by club-fighting, and the estranged factions may utilize the interval between club fighting and more violent hostilities to establish new gardens. This is also consistent with the political philosophy of the YąnomamÖ: chest pounding duels and club fights function to permit the aggrieved to demonstrate their ferocity in acts of violence, while the existence of several levels of

[1] The forms of fighting, in increasing degree of violence, are: side-slapping duels, chest-pounding duels, slapping of either the side or the chest with the flat side of a machete, club-fighting duels, spear-fighting duels, raiding with the tactic of ambush, and treacherous feasts. I have discussed this pattern elsewhere. Chagnon, 1967.

578 violence simultaneously permits the expression of hostility
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241 in such a way that the groups can split from each other on
182 relatively peaceful terms. The particular form of violence
* 152 employed in settling grievances is determined by a number of considerations, one of which is the likelihood that the resulting factions will be victimized by the raids of a powerful
578 enemy. Thus, in the splitting of villages, the gradations in
*621
*628 forms of violence permit of settlement patterns suited to
241 given military situations. Villages torn by internal con-
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722 flicts may find it easier to split into two relatively peaceful
182 factions and remain geographically close to each other. In
152 this way, they can reunite into a single unit should either be attacked. Conversely, the violence pattern may also facilitate the separation of a large village into hostile groups that have no intention of reuniting: it permits suitable means for the temporary solution of a feud that will be carried to further ends after the two groups have separate gardens. The separation of the Monou-tedi from the Bisaasi-tedi is an example of the former, and the separation, at an earlier date, of both of these groups from the Patanowã-tedi is an example of the latter. Thus, while the bellicose behavior and values constrain co-residential groups to respond violently to affronts perpetrated on them by their co-villagers, their agricultural requirements can be accomodated by a graded system of violence that permits temporary solutions, albeit violent, while new gardens are cleared by the principals in a feud.

829
648 the Yąnomamö. This process is still going on.

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152 Ferocity and violence is further reflected in Yąnomamö cosmology. In their conception, the human soul has three
753 parts. One of these parts, the nąreshi, is capable of leav-
761 ing the body; when it does so, the person becomes ill and dies unless it (the nąreshi) returns. The nąreshi are inherited patrilineally for males and matrilineally for females.
825 Each human nąreshi has an animal or bird counterpart whose life is coextensive and coterminous with that of the human to which it corresponds. Many of the nąreshi are types of animals commonly taken by hunters. Thus, when the Yąnomamö kill game animals, they believe they also kill the human being to whom that nąreshi corresponds.[1] Hence, hunting in the eyes of the Yąnomamö is behaving fiercely, for every nąreshi animal killed also results in the death of some human, usually an enemy.

754 Shamanism also deals in ferocity, for the Yąnomamö
756 shamans all claim to take mysterious trips to the villages of their enemies and eat the nąreshi of the enemy's children.

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156 The complex of ferocity has an important consequence
152 in Yąnomamö social organization, as aggressive behavior detracts from the solidarity of alliances between villages and creates tension within villages. Men are constrained to act ferociously and seize on every opportunity to coerce others in order to display aggressiveness. Most of the displays of

[1] They are not concerned about killing their own nąreshi, for humans and their nąreshi animals live in complementary distribution.

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Most of the displays of ferocity have to do with cruelties inflicted on women, particularly wives, as this is both a safe and a legitimate way of displaying aggressiveness.

One of the corollaries of this ideology is to take advantage of weak neighbors, for in so doing one can display ferocity and gain materially (by abducting women). Villages that have many enemies are particularly good targets, for other villages can participate in the raiding against these disadvantaged villages with little fear of retaliation (see Chapter V). This attitude is also manifest in the political dealings with allies. Whenever allied villages differ markedly in size and strength, the weaker of the two is at a disadvantage, for the larger village will coerce it out of women. Since women are greatly prized, there is the constant threat that an ally will turn against its friends if the circumstances indicate that a substantial number of women can be abducted. Members of allied villages that have recently entered into alliance never really trust each other, as each fears that the other may turn on it to seize women. Whenever the men of the village go on raids, they conceal their women and children in the jungle in case a group of men from an allied village unexpectedly visit and find the poorly guarded women too much of a temptation to pass by.

Political dealings between allies are such that each attempts to demonstrate to the other that it is completely sovereign and capable of defending itself. No group can afford to permit the notion among allies that it is weak and

628 can be pushed around. Thus, even the strongest alliances are tenuous at best, as the possibility is ever present that one of the allies will treacherously turn on the other.

*628 In February 1965 the Bisaasi-tedi held a feast for
• 152 the Mahekodo-tedi and Boreta-tedi. The visitors arrived
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527 earlier than scheduled, ate excessively, stole food from the gardens at night, and refused to go home after the feast terminated. The Bisaasi-tedi had not alternative but to challenge the guests to a chest-pounding duel; failure to have done so would have implied that they could be easily coerced. When the guests were challenged, they packed and departed. For a while the Bisaasi-tedi felt that they had successfully coerced their guests into leaving, presuming that their guests departed out of fear. However, the guests returned that evening to meet the challenge, lest the rumor spread that they themselves were weak and could be intimidated. Just before I left the field a rumor was circulated that the Mõmaribõwei-tedi had accused the Bisaasi-tedi of weakness, and wanted to fight them to show them they were stronger. The rumor asserted that the Mõmaribõwei-tedi intended to challenge the Bisaasi-tedi to a chest-pounding duel. The Bisaasi-tedi were enraged when they heard of this rumor, and immediately sent a delegation of men to Mõmaribõwei-tedi to challenge the men of that village to a fight. But, to show that they were not only not cowards but exceptionally fierce as well, they challenged the Mõmaribõwei-tedi to a duel with axes! The Mõmaribõwei-tedi denied the rumor and the duel never took place.

000 never took place.

*621 *623 156 152 One of the functions served by the levels of violence in Yąnomamö fighting is that the Yąnomamö are able to exhibit their ferocity in relatively benign forms and thereby live up to their claims of fierceness. But, since any form of violence can escalate to a more serious form of fighting, the system of violence itself constitutes a strain on the solidarity of relationships between and within villages.

*628 527 574 578 152 156 One peculair feature of this syndrome of fierceness is that smaller villages tend to be the most aggressive in their dealings with outsiders and with allies. The reason seems to be that smaller villages are more compelled to display their tenacity, as they are more obviously the weaker members in alliances. The expression of violence by members of allied villages, ironically enough, takes place during feasts. Thus, grievances that may have developed between members of allied villages since they last feasted together are satisfied during the course of the next feast. Thus, during the situations most likely to promote solidarity, allies frequently display their capacity to fight, informing their allies that they are sovereign, friendly, but fierce. The form of violence associated with feasting is usually chest pounding, but if someone is injured, the duel may escalate to side-slapping with the flat side of a machete. It smacks of the ridiculous to witness groups of men beating each other violently in such duels, and shortly thereafter embrace each other around the neck and chant, each man

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promising the other to be a faithful friend, to give goods, and to provide the other with women.

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Thus, canons of political behavior and the high value placed on ferocity have the effect of creating a considerable amount of tension both within and between villages. In short, Yanomamö philosophy regarding ferocity and the associated behavior reduces internal village solidarity and weakens political alliances between villages. Indirectly, it promotes village splitting and warfare.

they have, but they must revenge raids coming from Bisaasi-tedi. Now that Pararuriwë and his followers have moved away from Kaobëwë's group, the Patanowë-tedi can raid Pararuriwë without having to 'look twice' before shooting. As Pararuriwë's faction is a small one, it is vulnerable; one raid from the Patanowë-tedi will force it to rejoin Kaobëwë's group. The internal stability of the reunited groups will suffer if this happens, as Pararuriwë will be obliged to demonstrate his leadership capacity. This will involve making an issue out of an incident that probably would have been overlooked prior to the separation of the two groups, and internal friction will be high.

The split within Patanowë-tedi

The incessant raiding from Hasabëwë-tedi, Kashorawë-tedi, Yabitawë-tedi, Monou-tedi, Bisaasi-tedi and their respective allies brought about a high degree of tension among the Patanowë-tedi. It was not safe to leave the village at any time. The Patanowë-tedi had attempted to split into three groups several years earlier, as the population had reached a large size and internal fighting was a nuisance. The development of the war with the Hasabëwë-tedi forced them to reunite. Factionalism, however, was pronounced within the village, and the added tension brought about by the new war with Monou-tedi, Bisaasi-tedi and the latter's two Shamatari allies ultimately led to an internal split within Patanowë-tedi a month before I left the field.

[For the functional aspects of chest-pounding as a means of resolving conflict situations involving a high degree of emotions, see category 578.]

11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1968 SQ18 Yanomama SQ18

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Fig. 1-1 Members of allied villages engaged in a chest-pounding duel which followed a feast.

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way of life. The thing that impressed me most was the importance of aggression in their culture. I had the opportunity to witness a good many incidents that expressed individual vindictiveness on the one hand and collective bellicosity on the other. These ranged in seriousness from the ordinary incidents of wife beating and chest pounding to dueling and organized raiding by parties that set out with the intention of ambushing and killing men from enemy villages (Fig. 1-1). One of the villages discussed in the chapters that follow was raided approximately twenty-five times while I conducted the fieldwork, six times by the group I lived among.

11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1968 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

that I had to become very much like the Yąnomamö to be able to get along with them on their terms: sly, aggressive, and intimidating. 114 123

Had I failed to adjust in this fashion I would have lost six months of supplies to them in a single day or would have spent most of my time ferrying them around in my canoe or hunting for them. As it was, I did spend a considerable amount of time doing these things and did succumb to their outrageous demands for axes and machetes, at least at first. More importantly, had I failed to demonstrate that I could not be pushed around beyond a certain point, I would have been the subject of far more ridicule, theft, and practical jokes than was the actual case. In short, I had to acquire a certain proficiency in their kind of interpersonal politics and to learn how to imply subtly that certain potentially undesirable consequences might follow if they did such and such to me. They do this to each other in order to establish precisely the point at which they cannot goad an individual any further without precipitating retaliation. As soon as I caught on to this and realized that much of their aggression was stimulated by their desire to discover my flash point, I got along much better with them and regained some lost ground. It was sort of like a political game that everyone played, but one in which each individual sooner or later had to display some sign that his bluffs and implied threats could be backed up. I suspect that the frequency of wife beating is a component of this syndrome, since men can display their ferocity and show others that they are capable of violence. Beating a wife with a club is considered to be an acceptable way of displaying ferocity and one that does not expose the male to much danger. The important thing is that the man has displayed his potential for violence and the implication is that other men better treat him with respect and caution. 114 123 152 [593]

After six months, the level of demand was tolerable in the village I used for my headquarters. The Indians and I adjusted to each other and knew what to expect with regard to demands on their part for goods, favors, and services. Had I confined my fieldwork to just that village alone, the field experience would have been far more enjoyable. But, as I was interested in the demographic pattern and social organization of a much larger area, I made regular trips to some dozen different villages in order to collect genealogies or to recheck those I already had. Hence, the intensity of begging and intimidation was fairly constant for the duration of the fieldwork. I had to establish my position in some sort of pecking order of ferocity at each and every village. 114 121 123

For the most part, my own "fierceness" took the form of shouting back at the Yąnomamö as loudly and as passionately as they shouted at me, especially at first, when I did not know much of their language. As I became more proficient in their language and learned more about their political tactics, I became more sophisticated in the art of bluffing. For example, I paid one young man a machete to cut palm trees and make boards from the wood. I used these to fashion a platform in the bottom of my dugout canoe to keep my possessions dry when I traveled by river. That afternoon I was doing informant work in the village; the long-awaited mission supply boat arrived, and most of the Indians ran out of the village to beg goods from the crew. I continued to work in the village for another hour or so and went down to the river to say "hello" to the men on the supply boat. I was angry when I discovered that the Indians had chopped up all my palm boards and used them to paddle their own canoes[5] across the river. I knew that if 114 123 [799]

[5]The canoes were obtained from missionaries, who, in turn, got them from a different tribe. [501] [439]

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5

Yąnomamö Warfare

Levels of Violence

*628 THE FEAST AND ALLIANCE can and often do fail to establish stable, amicable relationships between sovereign villages. When this happens, the groups may coexist for a period of time without any overt expressions of hostility. This, however, is an unstable situation, and no two villages that are within comfortable walking distance from each other can maintain such a relationship indefinitely: They must become allies,
*628 or hostility is likely to develop between them. Indifference leads to ignorance or suspi-
721 cion, and this soon gives way to accusations of sorcery. Once the relationship is of this
754 sort, a death in one of the villages will be attributed to the malevolent *hekura* sent by shamans in the other village, and raids will eventually take place between them.

726 Yąnomamö warfare proper is the raid. That is, not all of their feuding and squabbles can be considered as war, although the values associated with war—bellicosity, ferocity, and violence—undoubtedly increase the amount of all kinds of fighting.

*628 War is only one form of violence in a graded series of aggressive activities (Chag-
578 non 1967). Indeed, some of the other forms of fighting, such as the formal chest-pounding
• 152 duel, may even be considered as the antithesis of war, for it provides an alternative to kill-
154 ing. Duels are formal and are regulated by stringent rules about proper ways to deliver and receive blows. Much of Yąnomamö fighting is kept innocuous by these rules so that the concerned parties do not have to resort to drastic means to resolve their grievances. The three most innocuous forms of violence, chest pounding, side slapping, and club fights, permit the contestants to express their hostilities in such a way that they can continue to remain on relatively peaceful terms with each other after the contest is settled. Thus, Yąnomamö culture calls forth aggressive behavior, but at the same time provides a regulated system in which the expressions of violence can be controlled.

*628 The most innocuous form of fighting is the chest-pounding duel described in the
578 last chapter. These duels usually take place between the members of different villages and are precipitated by such minor affronts as malicious gossip, accusations of cowardice, stinginess with food, or niggardliness in trading.